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C O N F I D E N T I A L ROME 001938

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STATE FOR A/S DESUTTER, T, AC, AC/CB, NP, NP/CBM, NP/MNA, NP/NE, NP/NDF, NP/PTR, NP/RA, VC, VC/CCB, VC/NA, VC/SM, VC/TA, NEA, NEA/ENA, EUR/WE, EUR/UBI, L-SCHWARTZ, L/ACV, L/NP, IO/S, HAGUE FOR CWC DEL, NSC FOR JOSEPH/TOBY/ABRAMS/KESHUP/CHUPA, SECDEF FOR OSD/ISP, JCS FOR DD, PMA-1 FOR WTC, CIA FOR PEASE

E.O. 12958: DECL: 04/19/2014

TAGS: IT LY PARM PREL MTCR

SUBJECT: LIBYA: U/S BOLTON MEETING WITH AMB. AL-OBEIDI

REF: ROME 1217

CLASSIFIED BY: POLITICAL M/C THOMAS COUNTRYMAN FOR REASONS 1.4(B) AND (D).

¶1. (C) SUMMARY: ON MAY 17, UNDERSECRETARY JOHN BOLTON CALLED ON LIBYAN AMBASSADOR TO ROME ABDUL ATI AL-OBEIDI TO DISCUSS CONTINUING PROGRESS ON LIBYA'S WMD COMMITMENTS. AL-OBEIDI SPOKE SOFTLY AND REGRETTED THAT THE US HAD PUBLICLY SINGLED OUT SYRIA AS ONE OF THE STATES WITH WHICH LIBYA WAS CEASING TRADE IN MILITARY ITEMS. HE HOPED THAT OUR STATEMENTS COULD FOCUS ON THE POSITIVE. HE SAID TRIPOLI WAS STILL STUDYING US PROPOSALS ON THE DISPOSITION OF ITS SCUD-B FLEET AND THE CHECKLIST FOR THE LONG-TERM VERIFICATION PLAN. END SUMMARY

¶2. (C) REGARDING THE US ANNOUNCEMENT MAY 14 OF LIBYA'S CESSATION OF MILITARY TIES WITH PROLIFERATORS, BOLTON NOTED THE MISUNDERSTANDING ABOUT OUR SPECIFIC MENTION OF SYRIA, IRAN AND N. KOREA LAST WEEK, STATING WE HAD UNDERSTOOD THAT TRIPOLI HAD HAD NO OBJECTION TO OUR DOING SO. AL-OBEIDI LISTED THE MANY PROBLEMS LIBYA HAD INTERNALLY AND WITH OTHER ARAB STATES, NOTING THAT THE SYRIANS WERE CALLING THE LIBYANS "TRAITORS" WITHIN THE ARAB LEAGUE MEETINGS. HE ASKED THAT WE NOT GO THROUGH ANOTHER ROUND OF INCONSISTENT STATEMENTS ABOUT WHETHER OR NOT SYRIA WAS INCLUDED, BUT INSTEAD WORK ON A JOINT STATEMENT THAT EMPHASIZES THE POSITIVE, AS THE SECRETARY HAD DONE OVER THE WEEKEND. BOLTON SAID WE WERE

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CONTENT NOT TO EXTEND THE PUBLIC DISCUSSION OF WHETHER OR NOT SYRIA WAS INCLUDED. HE NOTED THAT THE LIBYANS NEEDED, SOMEHOW, TO ISSUE A CORRECTED STATEMENT, SINCE THE AGREED REFERENCE TO THE MTCR HAD BEEN DROPPED FROM FRIDAY'S STATEMENT. AL-OBEIDI READ THE STATEMENT, WITH THE INCLUSION OF MTCR, AND SAID HE WOULD MAKE SURE, WHEN HE MEETS THE FM AND OTHER LEADERS IN TRIPOLI MAY 18, THAT IT WAS ISSUED CORRECTLY.

¶2. (C) AL-OBEIDI SAID LIBYA WAS STILL STUDYING THE ISSUE OF WHETHER TO RETROFIT ITS SCUD-B FLEET TO MAKE IT MTCR COMPLIANT, OR TO PHASE OUT THE FLEET OVER THE FEW REMAINING YEARS OF ITS LIFE, AS GEN. NOUR AHMED MAHMOUD HAD SUGGESTED AT THE LAST LONDON MEETING. HE NOTED THAT TRIPOLI MAY NEED THE USG TO WEIGH IN WITH MOSCOW SO THE RUSSIANS UNDERSTOOD THEY COULD DO BUSINESS ON MISSILES WITH LIBYA. BOLTON SAID WE LOOKED FORWARD TO THEIR DECISION ON PHASE-OUT VS. RETROFIT, AND WERE PREPARED TO SEND AN EXPERT TEAM TO LIBYA SOONEST.

¶3. (C) AL-OBEIDI SAID THAT LIBYA WAS ALSO STUDYING THE CHECKLIST OF THE LONG-TERM VERIFICATION PLAN, AND WOULD RESPOND SOON.

¶4. (C) BOLTON NOTED THAT HE HAD GIVEN MUSA KUSA A PAPER CONCERNING ARTICLE 98 AGREEMENTS UNDER THE INTERNATIONAL CRIMINAL COURT TREATY, WHICH HAVE ALREADY BEEN SIGNED BY LIBYA'S NEIGHBORS IN N. AFRICA. AL-OBEIDI SAID HE WOULD ALSO DISCUSS THIS WITH THE FOREIGN MINISTER.

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